

NOTES TO BILL NYE

He Reviews the Manuscript of Some Correspondents.

POETRY BY AN UNKNOWN

The Man Who Wants Some Pointers on a Comic Oration—An Essay on Books—Different Kinds of Books.

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Recently I have received a number of communications, both prose and poetry, all asking me my opinion of the work. I select a few of the most pronounced. Some of them I have changed a little to make the lines run more smoothly, just as great editors every little while add sentiments of their own to my work, thus giving currency to them that others would be killed by the printer.



ELEVATED A CHILD.

People often wonder why editors look so drawn and cold. It is not lack of food that gets the editor about so hot but the extremes he bears in the composing room and the rapping of the printer's steel rods on his case. If the editor could suspend the rapping in these cases he would not suffer so.

Andrew A. Smith, inventive genius, counselor of new and practical ideas and dealer in hard and soft coal, writes a good hand, but his piece is too soft, and there is a reticence about the points that would make the use of the article, especially in a hilly country, impracticable and no good.

Alice V. Van Vassuppen of New Berlin, Union county, Pa., writes as follows:

Mr. Nye—I have been requested to deliver a comic oration at Central Pennsylvania college on the 12th of June. I thought you might be anxious to see some of such an oration. I am going to write in my oration that I have been corresponding with you and give them your answer if any in my oration.

It would be better, Alice, for you to deliver your first comic talk and be killed now than to wait 30 years and suffer all that time. Just do the best you can, and between whiles and while you are thinking of other comic thoughts you can wipe the roquefort cheese off your glasses.

Anything comic should be spontaneous. If you succeed, I will get you to write a lecture for me that would be comic. I never could. When you said you would deliver a comic oration and then put your trust in me for the material, Alice, you tumbled the talk—made a bad play—lost a tally and corked yourself.

N. B.—Leave your best suit of clothes at home when delivering a "comic oration." Then you will have something to wear the next day.

We next pass on to speak of another young man who aspires to more serious literature. He writes as follows, the name only having been changed for the sake of his little sister and a couple of parents who ought to know better than to bring him into the world and then encourage him to write for the press. I should be glad to show these pieces if they will take the trouble to call at 22 Vesey street during my office hours there, which are from a.m. in the forenoon to p.m. in the afternoon. He says:

COLUMBUS, Dec. 22, 1891.
Dear Master—I have sent my composition of my own composition, which I wrote at the age of 12. I desire you to let me know whether you consider it a worth while to publish it or not. I have written a large number of compositions of prose and poetry, have taken a fancy to writing ever since 12 years old, please inform me all you can about this matter. In haste,
Alice All Smart.

Then follows the article on "Books." It gives me no trouble to sit in judgment on such a work, but some one must do it. I exhort my confidants in saying that he is the Judge Cobb of literature, and that the great problem of books is with him himself. I have endeavored to give it more clearness of dictation, but without success. Here is the treatise:

Books are a very useful thing; we mankind, they help cultivate the mind and strengthen the memory; their chief use is popular to every educated or uneducated; memory is a part of the most useful sources of knowledge; it is derived from books.

Suppose for instance your child was suffering from rheumatism and you knew not what in your power to do, what to give to relieve her what might be done in this case? why a knowledge of medicine and a good understanding of the disease would be of great service to him to relieve her suffering.

Where will that knowledge arise from? if there is a book treating on disease and a cure which she can provide by preparation for her child's cure will suffice like in our suffering from rheumatism. The knowledge in that case comes from a book.

The ordinary books of the present day are divided into two classes, good books and bad books.

A good book counselor that which is pure and simple, will teach the mind to fast and a good book counselor that which is simple and clear that which is a treatment of that which might possibly happen.

While on the other hand a bad book contains material reading that which would be the social or character harm. That book which is full of trash, which would be of no use to any one in a course of study, makes the reader ill.

On reading books to read because of the falsehood in them, there is a book which would make a poor and miserable man when the strong, deepest desire of thought is to make him a good man. The other class of books are those that are good for the soul.

We should never go to a book with a preconceived idea, nor should we be influenced by the folly of a higher power greater than our own.

We should never read reading because it does not increase our knowledge we do not know or think.

What shall we say in reply to this letter?

In the division of books of course he has made a mistake. Instead of dividing books into good and bad books, I should

divide them into books which will or will not cultivate a child, if used at table in the proper spirit. Even bad books may do this.

I had seen me one time a large, beautiful book called "The Guilty Crime" and written by a young girl. It was not a bad book, though it went into the social problem a little deeper than I had, being a busy man anyway, with no time to be moral, but my son for three years at table used that book to chide himself, and now he is what's called a half back at one of our best colleges.

When we speak of books, we should define the question of what we are going to use them for.

I had a second cousin killed in Maine two years ago by a blow on the head with a book which was pronounced by Mr. Winter to be "flat, tame and utterly weak."

I had a set of encyclopedias once, 20 volumes of it, with an information in them, and yet when I was lying with a broken leg on an old hospital bed in my own room, and the bed broke down, leaving me on the gable of my head, with the broken leg in the air, held there by a pulley and 10-pound weight extension, when hands slowly built upon a shanty of encyclopedias till I once more rested in a horizontal way.

All this was due to a encyclopedia, which, as Gens Field, who had one like it, told me, always referred him to "Maternity" when he hunted in for "Baby," and it was eight years before he got the maternity volume. He also said that when he hunted for "Apple" he was referred to "Pomology," a book that came seven years after he quit farming.

I close with an effect in verse, not giving the author's name, as I desire to bring the author out gradually. If the piece is well received, I may use more of them.

You will be surprised when you hear what the author's name is.

The first one who guesses it, by closing \$10, will get the true name of the author in a typewritten note.

So will the second one.

IN MEMORIAM.

One bright Saturday morning
In eighteen hundred and ninety-two.
I walked up the road
From domestic week to day.

I chance to meet on that road
Two gentlemen and a lady too.
Said they, "We are well."
As they hurried on I was.

This was April, the second day,
And they hurried on their way
To the ordinaries
Of J. B. Thayway.

The day rolled on.
And when the sun was gone
This lady and these two guests
Were on their way home.

I met them again.
And the lady's husband said,
With sick and aching head."

This was at Catawba,
A friendly little place,
And the people that stay round here
Are full of grace and nothing else.

Said I to the sufferer,
There's a magician here, I'm sure,
That will cure you of your sickness
And aching head."

And upon this recommendation
The medicine he said to try.
For he was suffering from misery
Around the nose and eyes.

And after calling for some mail
He started for his home,
Thinking very little
For the last he'd ever dream.

But another week
He came again,
When the suffering of this man neek
By death was last allayed.

Then I made a call,
On Sunday night, the tenth,
And I was made disconsolate
With grief and discontent.

This was at the home
Of the sufferer, I have spoken of
Where I found his wife
With her heart almost broken.

CHAMBERLAIN'S COUGH REMEDY.

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